



File Code: 1950

Date: June 16, 2016

Dear Interested Party,

The Hood Canal Ranger District, Olympic National Forest, has completed the Environmental Assessment (EA) and draft Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact (DN/FONSI) for the proposed *Lower Skokomish Vegetation Management Project*. The purpose of the project is to implement the Olympic National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan by increasing the forest structural diversity and accelerating the development of late-successional forest characteristics of previously managed stands in the Skokomish River watershed. The project includes variable density thinning of approximately 4,484 acres of second-growth forest stands that are between 44 and 78 years old. The 31,000-acre project planning area is located within the Lower North Fork Skokomish River, Lower South Fork Skokomish River, and the Middle North Fork Skokomish River 6th field watersheds which lie within the larger 5th field Skokomish River watershed in Mason County, Washington. Units proposed for treatment are located in: T22N, R5W, Sections 1-14, 16-22, 24, 26, 28-3, 31-34, 36; T22N, R6W, Sections 13, 22, 23; and T23N, R4W, Sections 7-9; Willamette Meridian.

After careful review and consideration of the public comments and analysis disclosed in the EA, the draft DN/FONSI indicates my intention to implement Alternative B, the Proposed Action with mitigation measures and project design criteria, as described in the EA. My draft decision is based on a review of the EA and the project record, which shows a thorough evaluation of relevant scientific information, a consideration of responsible opposing views, and acknowledgement of incomplete or unavailable information, scientific uncertainty, and risk.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OPPORTUNITY

Objections concerning this action will be accepted for 45 calendar days following publication of a notice in *Peninsula Daily News*, Port Angeles, WA, the official newspaper of record.

How to Object and Timeframe

This proposed decision is subject to objection pursuant to 36 CFR 218, Subparts A and B. Objections will only be accepted from individuals or organizations that submitted project-specific written comments during a designated opportunity for public participation (scoping or 30-day public comment period). Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted comments unless based on new information arising after the designated comment period.

Objections must be submitted within 45 days following the publication of the legal notice in the *Peninsula Daily News*, Port Angeles, Washington. The date of this legal notice is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or



timeframes provided by any other source. It is the objector's responsibility to ensure evidence of timely receipt (36 CFR 218.9).

Objections must be submitted to the reviewing officer: Forest Supervisor, Reta Laford, 1835 Black Lake Blvd. SW, Olympia, WA 98512. Please put OBJECTION and the project name in the subject line. Objections may be submitted via mail, FAX (360-956-2330), or delivered during business hours (M-F 8:00am to 4:30pm). The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered objections are: 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Objections can be faxed to 360-956-2330.

Electronic objections should be submitted online via the project webpage:

http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=43401

On the project website within the "Get Connected" group to the right click on "Comment/Object on Project" and follow on-screen instructions for submitting objections. In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an objection, a verification of identity will be required for objection eligibility. If using an electronic message, a scanned signature is one way to provide verification.

Objections must include (36 CFR 218.8(d)): 1) name, address and telephone; 2) signature or other verification of authorship; 3) identify a single lead objector when applicable; 4) project name, Responsible Official name and title, and name of affected National Forest and/or Ranger District; 5) reasons for, and suggested remedies to resolve, your objections; and, 6) description of the connection between your objections and your prior comments. Incorporate documents by reference only as provided for at 36 CFR 218.8(b).

It is the responsibility of persons providing objections to submit them by the close of the objection period. It is the responsibility of persons providing objections by electronic means to ensure that their objection has been received. Each individual or representative from each organization submitting objection must either sign the objection or verify identity upon request.

If you have questions regarding this project or would like to obtain a hard copy of the EA and Draft DN/FONSI, please contact Kim Crider, project lead, at kcrider@fs.fed.us, or by phone at 360-956-2376.

Sincerely,



DEAN YOSHINA

Hood Canal District Ranger